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ABSTRACT

In response to the growing trend toward lifelong learning by mature, goal-seeking adults, Kirkwood Community College has designed two unique, nontraditional programs which emphasize the students' unique interests, skills, background and goals: the Associate of General Studies (AGS) degree program and the Independent Study in Fine Arts Program. Through the development of these two innovative programs, the fine arts have found their place in the community college curriculum, providing a valuable and practical educational experience. The AGS is an individually designed and college-approved degree which considers the student's prior job experiences, personal achievements and previous educational course work. The program involves an orientation session, assessment of student background and abilities, the formulation of educational goals to be pursued, the assignment of a mentor with expertise in relevant areas, and the completion of the requirements of the student's educational plan. The Independent Study in the Fine Arts Program is a more specialized educational experience focusing on the skills necessary to produce a marketable and competitive art object. Similar in concept to the old world practice of apprenticeship, the program involves students learning through practical experience under the close supervision and guidance of the instructor. Independent study opportunities are available in ceramics, painting, and photography. A discussion of program benefits and an outline of the independent study program are included. (LAL)

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GENERAL STUDIES FOR THE FINE ARTS: AN ALTERNATIVE

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Perhaps the greatest obligation of a community college is to provide quality educational programs of study that are geared to the needs of individuals within the community. This obligation demands diversity and flexibility within the college structure, and a willingness of both the administration and faculty to actively respond to the demands of the student/community needs, by providing challenging and useful educational experiences. The educational experience at the community college often presents itself as an alternative to the traditional four-year college or university.

Kirkwood has sought to maintain this philosophy by offering a variety of programs based on an individual's personal or career goals. We offer sixty-five vocational-technical programs, a two-year Associate of Arts degree designed for the student who intends to seek further training at a four-year college or university, a two-year Associate or Applied Science degree with emphasis on training for a specific job or career, and a broad spectrum of general community education classes offered on and off campus.

As a part of the community college curriculum, the Fine Arts have a unique place in the scheme of things. While recognized as a functional part of the educational experience, in that they nourish and develop abilities, awareness and sensitivity, the Fine Arts are often thought of as merely a supplement to the more "practical" programs offered at community colleges. The serious art student often seeks his/her education at a four-year college or university. The adult student, seeking a career in art, or simply wishing to enhance his/her life style by taking courses in the Fine Arts designed to compliment individual interests or skills,

has been limited in educational options. In response to the growing trend toward life-long learning by the mature goal-seeking adult, Kirkwood has designed two unique, "non-traditional" programs which emphasize the student's unique interests, skills, background and goals: the Associate of General Studies Degree Program and the Independent Study in Fine Arts Program. Through the development of these two innovative programs, the Fine Arts have found their place in the community college curriculum and provide a valuable and practical educational experience.

The Associate of General Studies Degree is an individually designed and college approved degree which considers the student's prior job experiences, personal achievements and previous educational course work. It combines the student goals with professional assistance in the development of a challenging and meaningful program. There are no required or "core" courses in order to complete the degree--the curriculum is designed by the student. Courses are selected based upon goals and the student is allowed to work on educational experiences he or she selects for his or her own growth and development.

In the AGS program, the student attends an orientation session which aids the student in developing the necessary skills to embark upon a General Studies Program. The student, in conjunction with specific instructors of the student's choice, will need to be able to assess his/her background and abilities in order to be successful in accomplishing his/her educational and artistic goals. Once the student is able to formulate and describe the educational goals he/she wishes to pursue, the AGS coordinator will suggest a professional staff person to serve as a mentor for that student. A mentor is a person who has expertise in the

specific areas the AGS student is pursuing. The mentor will not only be a friend, but an advisor and advocate as well. The mentor and student will work closely together throughout the program in order that the student formulates and completes each component of the General Studies Degree.

When the final plan has been formulated and approved by the endorsement committee, the student will begin his/her program of study. Graduation will occur when the student has finished the requirements he/she has included in the plan and when a final review of the plan has been accomplished. In the Fine Arts this will be the presentation of an exhibit of work done during the period of study in the General Study Program. Upon completion of the final review, the AGS coordinator will recommend the student for graduation.

The Independent Study in the Fine Arts Program is a more specialized educational experience offered to the serious art student who desires to learn the skills necessary to produce a marketable and competitive art object. This program is designed for the student who is not seeking an AGS degree or an AA degree, but rather, one who feels the need to work daily with an art instructor in acquiring the skills and knowledge necessary to continue their art work after leaving the college environment. Similar in concept to the old world practice of apprenticeship, the student learns his art by practical experience, under the close supervision and guidance of the instructor. The instructor is limited to having not more than three students in the General Studies Program during an academic quarter.

In the ceramics studio, the student learns all phases of the craft-mixing of clays and glazes, firing the kilns, throwing or forming pots

on the potter's wheel and a variety of intermediate and advanced clay throwing techniques. The diversity of technique and style is displayed in educational workshops, presented by visiting artists and external contact with professional craftspeople in the area. The length of time to complete the program is based on both the individual student's career goals and his/her progress in acquiring skill and proficiency.

After meeting with the ceramics instructor, the student will fill out an Independent Study Proposal and Contract form, stating learning objectives and strategies. After development and approval of the final plan, the student will begin the program. The program will be completed after both the student and instructor have agreed that he/she has attained the desired career or personal objectives.

This type of specialized program in ceramics not only offers a positive educational experience for the student, but also provides individuals with the training and skills necessary to re-enter the community with a lucrative vocation.

The painting student also interacts with the instructor in a way that resembles the apprenticeship arrangements of bygone eras. Students learn technical information regarding canvas preparation, media, and application techniques, along with aesthetic attitudes in an intensive studio environment that is more conducive to dialogue than the usual classroom setting, and the student and mentor can work on the same projects together, or in other ways adapt to the individual needs of whatever directions his/her work is taking.

In the photography area, the general studies student works on his/her own project in directions arrived at during regular conferences with the

instructor. New directions can then be suggested by either during these meetings. The direct one-on-one learning situation seems to greatly benefit the student who has completed all the available photography courses but wishes to continue in a supervised, self-directed, continuing study of photography.

The cost of the program to the institution and student is an exciting element of the program. The investment by the institution is in direct relationship to student enrollment. The monitor is paid one-hundred-fifty dollars for each student working in his/her area. To date we have not had a need for additional space or equipment to operate the program. Therefore, the facilities, equipment cost, and other support expenses are within the budget of the existing art program. The student pays the traditional credit hour fee (which at our college is fourteen dollars and thirty-five cents per credit hour) plus a lab fee of ten dollars per credit hour. The student elects to take as few or as many hours, up to a maximum of twelve credit hours, as he/she feels he/she can handle. The maximum cost to the student is well under three hundred dollars for the quarter registration. The full time student (a student carrying twelve credit hours or more) may work in the art area as many hours during the week as he desires. As a matter of fact, to date we have been able to make the art area available to the students on a seven days a week basis.

We have a unique method for replenishing our supplies. The students contribute every tenth art object to the Art Club. In turn this art object is placed on sale and the proceeds go to cover expenses. To date this method of generating funds has allowed the program to be ecomonic,

solvent and self supporting.

The benefits derived from the creative productivity in the art area have been encouraging. One of the direct outgrowths has been the increased awareness of the art program at the college through the monthly art sales and displays. Another benefit: the new found productivity and the quality of work has far exceeded my own expectations. As a college which deals primarily with commuting people (we have no dormitories on campus), the art area has become a nucleus for many student activities. We have developed somewhat of a family atmosphere; with the noon day meal being the center of activity. The pottery is a natural for a gourmet deli to come to life and our kitchen flourishes with nutrition and creativity, plus free coffee.

As of today we have guided eight students through this program. It is not the intent of the art department to create a program with lots of numbers, but rather to offer to a few a unique educational experience.

A community college is, in itself, an alternative to traditional educational pathways. Its philosophy is based upon recognizing the uniqueness of each individual's educational and personal goals. By offering these two programs, Kirkwood is providing a learning experience in which the student is encouraged to express and develop that uniqueness.

Independent Study in Fine Arts

INDEPENDENT STUDY IN FINE ARTS

Statement of Purpose

A specialized educational experience, offered to the serious and eager art student who desires to learn the skills necessary in order to produce an effective and marketable product. A program designed for the student who is not seeking an Associate of Arts Degree, or an Associate of General Studies Degree, but rather, for one who seeks to work on an individualized basis with a ceramics instructor, in acquiring the specialized skills and knowledge in order to continue their craft after leaving the college environment. In the ceramics studio, the student will learn all the phases of the craft-mixing clays and glazes, firing the kilns, the throwing or forming of pots on the potter's wheel and a variety of intermediate and advanced throwing techniques, with emphasis on the development of individual style. Daily, individualized instruction is provided by the instructor, along with workshops given by visiting artists and instruction in the techniques of marketing the finished product. The length of time for completion of this program will be based upon the individual's personal career goals and his/her development and mastery of the craft.

INDEPENDENT STUDY IN FINE ARTS

Goals and Objectives

1. To provide an environment for the student to acquire skills for developing a viable trade/profession as an artist.

2. The program shall be constructed according to each individual, based on his/her goals and skills.

3. The program will use the existing educational resources at Kirkwood Community College and to a lesser extent the Area Ten community.

INDEPENDENT STUDY IN FINE ARTS

Proposed Plan

Introduction to Independent Study

↓

Student Meets With Ceramics Instructor
Career/Goal analysis
Explanation of program requirements
Preliminary study plan

↓

Final Plan Development

↓

Final Plan Approval

↓

Implementation (and modification)

↓

Review of Plan Attainment

↓

Completion of Program

KIRKWOOD COMMUNITY COLLEGE
Independent Project/General Study Program in Fine Arts

Independent Project Proposal and Contract

1. _____ 2. _____
Title of General Study Program

3. Course number:
(See catalog or handout for course description)

4. Term: Fall, Winter, Spring, Summer Session I, II 5. Credit Hours_____

6. Planned Location of Study:

7. Course Title:

8. Brief description of proposed independent study experience:

9. Learning objectives (use reverse side)

10. Learning strategies (use reverse side)

11. Learning demonstration and evaluation (use reverse side)

12. List primary resources

(a) Texts (attach bibliography if appropriate)

(b) Internal (KCC) resources (faculty, facilities, courses, etc.)

(c) External resources (persons, places, etc.)

Signature and date

1. _____
Student Date

2. _____
Sponsoring KCC Faculty Date

3. _____
Mentor Date

4. _____
External Resource Date

5. _____
Other (Specify) Date

6. _____
GS Program Faculty Member Date

EVALUATION FOR ART CLASSES

Course_____ Day and Time_____ Term_____

Name_____

Instructor_____

1. Expectations of course:

2. Skills learned in course (rate yourself in relation to your expectations):

3. Your ideas concerning methods to improve course:

4. Evaluation of instructor: (You may write on the back of this paper.)
   a. liabilities and strengths
   b. weakness
   c. on time to class
   d. preparation
   e. attendance
   f. ability to communicate
   g. concern for the individual student
   h. knowledge of material covered

5. Personal evaluation: (You may write on the back of this paper.)
   a. new skills learned
   b. effort contributed to course
   c. class attendance
   d. test for scores on papers
   e. general quality of work accomplished

6. What grade do you think you deserve for this course? Include the rationale for this grade.

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